



Faculty of Social Sciences

IMPACT OF STATE BENGHOH DAM PROJECT TOWARDS THE LOCAL BIDAYUH COMMUNITY

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Grade: _____

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Final Year Project Report

Masters

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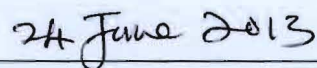
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This project report which entitled “**Impact of State Bengoh Dam Project towards the Local Bidayuh Community**”, was prepared by Sia Ai Ling (28167) is hereby read and approved by:



Prof. Gusni bin Saat

(Project Supervisor)



Date

IMPACT OF STATE BENGHO DAM PROJECT TOWARDS THE LOCAL
BIDAYUH COMMUNITY

SIA AI LING

Thesis is submitted to
Faculty of Social Sciences, University Malaysia Sarawak
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The way women have shown at all the various stages of the evolution of gender
 This is all I need like to thank God for his great grace that I have through it
 with to get that well done. To my family, especially my beloved mother for her
 love and support, especially during my childhood, the years of my life that
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 given me the ability. Also, to my friends, especially the ones who have been
 with me in this journey and the ones who have been my friends and
 family.

In addition, to the friends and family who have provided advice
 and support, especially during the years of my education, they have been my
 friends and family, especially during the years of my education, they have been my
 friends and family, especially during the years of my education, they have been my

**Dedicated to my beloved family and friends, who always bestow me
 sustainable motivations and encouragements**

I am grateful to my family and friends who have been my friends and family,
 especially during the years of my education, they have been my friends and family,
 especially during the years of my education, they have been my friends and family,
 especially during the years of my education, they have been my friends and family,

Again, I want to mention that, I also want to mention that, I also want to mention that,
 I am grateful to my family and friends who have been my friends and family,
 especially during the years of my education, they have been my friends and family,
 especially during the years of my education, they have been my friends and family,
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And, I want to mention that, I also want to mention that, I also want to mention that,
 I am grateful to my family and friends who have been my friends and family,
 especially during the years of my education, they have been my friends and family,
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ABSTRACT

Dam is a physical barrier constructed across a river or waterway to control the flow of or raise the level of water. Generally, this research aim to determine the main reasons of the villagers against the dam construction. In addition, the issues of compensation, agriculture and resettlement were broadly related to the villagers around the dam. Despite from that this research also explores the impact of the construction towards the Bidayuh people which locally live in the dam area in term of environment disturbance as well as flora and fauna. Apart from that, this study also had make a detailed examination about the problem of compensation that face by most Bidayuh where the Bidayuh will lose everything including their land, cultural heritage, livelihood and houses when they have to resettle in the new resettlement to beginning a new life of new place. This research is form of in depth-interview and observation research, using conversation analysis which consist of open and ended question to attain the information to what extend the four villager affected by the Bengoh dam project.

ABSTRAK

Dam adalah halangan fizikal dibina merentasi sungai atau laluan air untuk mengawal aliran atau meningkatkan tahap air. Secara umumnya, kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan sebab-sebab utama penduduk terhadap pembinaan empangan. Di samping itu, isu-isu pampasan, pertanian alnd dan penempatan semula secara umumnya berkaitan dengan penduduk kampung di sekitar empangan. Walaupun itu kajian ini juga meneroka kesan pembinaan terhadap orang-orang Bidayuh yang tempatan tinggal di kawasan empangan dalam jangka gangguan alam sekitar serta flora dan fauna. Selain daripada itu, kajian ini juga telah membuat pemeriksaan terperinci tentang masalah pampasan yang dihadapi oleh kebanyakan Bidayuh Bidayuh di mana akan kehilangan segala-galanya termasuk tanah, warisan budaya, kehidupan dan rumah-rumah apabila mereka menetap di penempatan baru untuk permulaan kehidupan baru tempat baru. Kajian ini adalah bentuk mendalam temuduga dan kajian pemerhatian, menggunakan analisis perbualan yang terdiri daripada terbuka dan berakhir soalan untuk mencapai maklumat dengan apa yang melanjutkan empat penduduk kampung yang terjejas disebabkan oleh projek empangan Bengoh.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Dams are massive barriers built across rivers and streams to confine and utilize the flow of water for human purposes such as irrigation and generation of hydroelectricity (James, 2005). Bengoh dam is the Sarawak's water reservoir project which takes place in Kuching. Demand for water in Kuching was increasing year by year because population in Kuching was rising in the time of urbanization. Government was fear that when during dry seasons would outstrip demand for natural supplies for all the residents in Kuching. So, in order to prevent this from happening, Bengoh dam is designed to ensure that adequately meet the increasing long-term water demand for Kuching including the surrounding areas such as *Samarahan, Asajaya, Sadong Jaya, Tasik Biru, Lundu, Sematan, Tapah, Beratok, Siburan* and *Serian* (Tawie, Angry Bidayus won't budge from Bengoh Dam area, 2010).

The construction work on the Bengoh Dam project was started in August 2007 and was scheduled for completion on Dec 6, 2010. This dam project is a second project in Malaysia to be constructed using Roller Compacted Concrete (RCC) technology after the Kinta Dam in Perak. The objective of this dam project is to supply raw water need in Kuching area. Demand for water in Kuching was increasing year by year because population in Kuching was rising in the time of urbanization. Besides, it also constructed to release of raw water during droughts to

provide sufficient raw water supply for Batu Kitang Water Treatment Plant. The stakeholders for this project are State government, JKR, Naim Cendera Holdings Berhad and Synohydro Company. The Naim Cendera Holdings Berhad is a Malaysian company that associated with the family of Sarawak Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud. There are four Bidayuh villages affected by this dam development respectively known as *Kampung Taba Sait*, *Kampung Semban*, *Kampung Rejoi* and *Kampung Pain Bojong*.

Generally the four villages, respectively known as *Kampung Taba Sait*, *Kampung Rejoi*, *Kampung Bojong or Pain* and *Kampung Semban* was the indigenous people of Bidayuh community live in Bengoh area. Approximately it is 48km from Kuching to Bengoh follow the Borneo Highland highway. (Refer to the Figure 1.1 below which show the location of the locality plan for Bengoh dam and its surrounding area).



Figure 1: The locality plan of the Bengoh dam area and its surrounding

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The four villages in Bengoh where estimated that 1,600 villagers which affected by dam project was still continue to stay at their respective village, while waiting for the completion of the new resettlement area. One of the four villages which is *Kampung Sait* had built their new houses at the mountain hill to prevent the flooded by dam project. Based on previous study under the Social and Environmental Impact assessment, most of the Bidayuh in Bengoh area was strongly claim that after the houses completed build, then the houses would be sold to them involved at RM48, 000 each unit and they strongly argue to buy the houses and will continue to live in their existing villages because this likely to be unfair to the villagers who their houses affected by dam project.

On the time of construction of Bengoh dam, many issues was affecting the four villages which are the land titles for the traditional villages and as well as the basic amenities such as clean water and electricity supply. According to the previous research as mention in the first paragraph above, before this the government has only compensated their houses and lands which affected by dam's water and does not compensated their farm lands and Native Customary Rights (NCR) lands which are not affected by the construction of the dam.

According to the previous research under the Sociology of Development courses, most of the affected villagers said before they decided to move out from their ancestral land, they would ensure and demanded to the government must pay fully and proper compensation to them by provided them with free houses at the new resettlement that are situated near *Kampung Semadang*. The head of the Bengoh areas had said that the compensation still around 6 million haven't pay to the

residents in four villages. In rural Bengoh, despite the Bidayuh was faithfully voting in Barisan Nasional (BN) government for years, but they still lack of basic amenities and however, they still vote for the Barisan Nasional (BN).

The dam had due for completed on December 2010 that had cost of RM310.65 million, but in February 2011, only 97.3% had ready completed and that will caused the delay which will cost up RM58.37 million. It is because new resettlement area still on completion of houses and some of the Bidayuh still live at Bengoh area where the dam can be fully completed when all the villagers have been resettled. That was expected the dam would fully operational by October 2013. Therefore, there are fundamental question that involve in this research which closely related to the main issues of the problem statement. Apart from that, also involve the impact towards flora and fauna that allocated around the affected Bengoh area.

1.3 MAIN OBJECTIVE

There are 3 fundamental main objectives in this research:

- I. To examine the reasons of the villagers against the dam's construction.
- II. To determine the impact of the dam towards the affected villagers in term of the degree of the flora and fauna and social impact.
- III. To discover the compensation issue which become the issues of the villagers refuse to budge from the dam area.

1.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

As been mention in the main objective section in page 5, the specific objectives of this research are critically elaborate the main objective in this research. Firstly, critically examine and evaluate the reasons of the villagers against the dam construction. Whereby, the construction of the dam does not get the approval of the local community as well as the villagers around the dam area. Thus, there are many problem arises upon the dam construction as the villagers does not agreed at the first place. Secondly, this studies also to determine the impact of the dam towards the villagers in term of the degree of flora and fauna and social impact as well. To elaborate more, the environment disturbance was the extinction of controlled species of birds and their habitat. While the social impact was seen in term of loses of the land right and agriculture land as well. For example, where and how they will farm and plant their crops once they lost their ancestor land when they transferred to new housing at *Kampung Semadang*. Furthermore, this research also will discover the real situation and problem regarding the compensation issue issues which the villagers claim that they didn't compensate enough by the government as well as their NCR (Native Customary Right) land. For example, the compensation was not fully paid by the government towards the affected land which privately own by the villager itself.

1.5 SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY

Bidayuh is one of the minority groups in Malaysia. The purpose of this research is to generate insight the compensation that is always issue regarding ethic Bidayuh in Bengoh dam. This study will prove that how the compensation issue will resolve by people and ensure whether the development of dam project improved standard of living among the people. Besides, this study will carry out the real evaluation and result on how many villages would be affected by the dam project and the same time critically examine thatif this problem cannot be solve, other development problem will happen and development will not be smoothly carried out. However the main issue of concern the problem when there is compensative by government. Furthermore, this research is contributed to the real situation and opinion of the villagers that involve getting the compensation from government. In addition, one of the reasons that the villager disagree the construction of dam is the government carried out this project without an agreement from villagers. This study is to create awareness that the development such as dam project is its impact on the society and country mainly socio-economical areas.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE COMMUNITY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Generally, the community that involve in this research was known as the Bidayuh people in one of the Kuching districts as known as Padawan districts. Generally, the Bidayuh constitute about 8% of the Sarawak population, numbering about 200,000 people. Bidayuh is the collective name for several indigenous groups found in southern Sarawak and northern West Kalimantan, on the island of Borneo, which are broadly similar in language and culture. In the olden days, the Bidayuh were known as “*Land Dayak*” meaning “*the Dayak of the hill country*”. Originally from the western part of Borneo, the collective name Land Dayak was first used during the period of Rajah James Brooke, the White Rajah of Sarawak where it is the terminology given by the Brooke and Colonial administrations in the olden days. However, today they prefer to be known as ‘*Bidayuh*’. In their dialect, “*Bi*” means “*People*” and “*Dayuh*” means “*Land*”. Therefore, the word “*Bidayuh*” means “*People of the Land*” (Chang, 2001).

collectively divided into two groups of *Tibiah* and *Sembaan* dialect. Kampung Pain Bojong and Kampung Taba Sait was known as *Tibiah groups*² and Kampung Semban and Kampung Rejoi known as *Sembaan groups*³ which can be detect by their language of speaking. However, their lifestyle, customs, culture and religion were similar to each other and they share the same value of life and Borneo rainforest where they belong to as well as survive with the surrounding environment. With no water conservation measures in place, repairs to existing infrastructure neither under way nor planned and hinging on a publicly suppressed Kuching Water Supply Study, the proposed Bengoh Dam catchment will consume an area of 12,700 hectares, the dam itself swallowing up to 8.5 square kilometres of flora and fauna including 199 Bidayuh families, their heritage farms, fishing, hunting and burial grounds, their customs, practices, and their Native Customary Rights (Garton, 2009).

2.4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TIBIAH RESETTLEMENT

According to *Tua Kampung* (Leader of the village) of Pain Bojong, Takuk ak. Simbas, aged 81, he said that the *Tibiah* group did not move from elsewhere to Padawan like other Bidayuh groups in the area. Whereas, he confirmed that the *Tibiah* group was the original inhabitant in Padawan. However, there was likelihood that the *Tibiah* group might be migrated from Kampung Goon (one of the village at West Kalimantan near the border) and its surrounding area, Kalimantan Barat, Indonesia into Sarawak because there are no boundary lines drawn between Sarawak and West Kalimantan in the olden days. Even today, both Bidayuh in *Goon* and *Tibiah* speaks the same dialect and they are many relatives between these two areas

² Believed to be one of the original inhabitants Bidayuh in Padawan which including some of the West Kalimantan people and surrounding area long before the border line was existed.

³ Does not belong to any group in Padawan where the people was mixed up from some part of Bau (Tringus), Braang, Selebung and Tibiah.

(Chang, 2001). Therefore, the *Tibiah* derives the name from a river known as Sungai Tibiah in Padawan. *Sungai Tibiah* flows out from the mountain in between the village of *Kampung Kiding* and *Kampung Kakas*. Initially, there was only one Tibiah settlement known as ***Rebak Rebuk***⁴ which was situated near to the existing *Pangkalan Ampat*, in Padawan (Chang, 2001).

After staying for quite sometimes, the population increased and there was a shortage of good farming land around the area. Partially, the worst thing was that before the White Rajah, Sir James Brooke ruled over Sarawak in 1841, the Tibiah group was very often being attacked by the *Skrang Ibans*⁵ and *Malay Pirates*⁶ from *Sadong*. The Bidayuh Tibiah had no other alternative but to divide among themselves and migrated to the new areas up on the hilly and mountainous areas in ulu Padawan in 1846, he mention that Tibiah settlement had 50 families only (Low, 1848).

2.4.1 Taba Sait's village and Pain Bojong's village

Kampung Taba Sait and Kampung Pain Bojong mainly share the same story of how they settle down at their settlement. As continue form the history of how the Bidayuh divided itself to some part of Padawan hill and up other up his, the Second group led by *Si-ang* (the another descendant of Bidayuh people) left *Rabak Rebuk* in 1850s. They went to a new place called *Jogong* where they establish a new settlement called ***Kampung Jogong***⁷ (Chang, 2001). They went to a new place called *Jogong* where they were established a new settlement called *Kampung jogong*. They

⁴ The first Tibiah resettlement

⁵ The roots of the Ibans community at Saribas where the origin of famous Iban warriors, Libau@Rentap.

⁶ The malay community before they were Muslims.

⁷ Located at the highest mountain near the settlement of Kampung Pain Bojong and Kampung Taba Sait nowadays.